



DATCP Announces Recipients of the Specialty Crop Block Grant

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MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has announced the 21 recipients of the specialty crop block grant. This grant is possible through funding by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

“The specialty crop block grant supports projects that develop research, educational tools, promotional strategies, and production techniques to create new markets and to foster job creation in Wisconsin’s specialty crop industries,” said DATCP Secretary Ben Brancel. “These recipients will build on opportunities and meet challenges to support thousands of specialty crop producers in Wisconsin and benefit millions of consumers around the world.”

Local, tribal and state government entities, private and non-profit organizations and institutions, and public and private colleges and universities were invited to apply for projects that would impact an entire specialty crop industry. Specialty crops include: fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops, including floriculture.

Wisconsin received \$977,022.39 of specialty crop block grant funding. Recipients include:

- **Bayfield County:** To expand and revitalize the fruit economy within the Bayfield Agricultural Enterprise Area.
- **Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin:** To continue to test low-risk fungicides for combating two common diseases that can decimate the three top cut flower crops in the state.
- **Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Unit (DATCP):** To continue a cost-share program for producers to increase the affordability of GAP/GHP audits for independent third-party certification.
- **Midwest Food Processors Association:** To continue to conduct field studies to evaluate nitrate leaching in sweet corn production to improve nitrogen use efficiency in production.
- **Midwest Pickle Association:** To continue to determine a definitive recommendation for calcium application to be applied to pickling cucumbers to produce the highest quality product.
- **Plant Industry Laboratory (DATCP):** To conduct a detection survey for a new tree root rot disease detected that may have a serious economic impact on the state’s fir tree production.
- **University of Wisconsin-Extension, Wisconsin Apple Growers Association, and DATCP:** To continue to develop SavorWisconsin.com as a free online marketing tool.
- **University of Wisconsin-River Falls Board of Regents:** To develop and further release new commercial strawberry, plum, apricot, and aronia cultivars.
- **University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents:** To continue to work with the cranberry industry to develop grower-driven sustainability standards for cranberry production.
- **University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents:** To continue to develop recommended practices for cranberry growers through the use of soil moisture probes for irrigation.
- **University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents:** To develop a best management practices workbook for Wisconsin cranberry production.
- **Wisconsin Apple Growers Association:** To enhance the sustainability of apple production through conservation and use of wild bees.
- **Wisconsin Christmas Tree Producers Association:** To promote the environmental, economic, emotional, and social benefits of Wisconsin farm grown Christmas trees.

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- **Wisconsin Farm Center (DATCP):** To continue to provide one-on-one technical assistance to underserved fresh market growers.
- **Wisconsin Grape Growers Association, Inc.:** To continue to employ a Viticulture Consultant to work with Wisconsin grape growers to overcome barriers for market expansion.
- **Wisconsin Ginseng Board:** To continue to work to obtain registrations of alternative pesticides and fungicides to target problematic pests dramatically impacting the developing crop.
- **Wisconsin Mint Board:** To continue to develop integrated management systems for improved mint growth in Wisconsin
- **Wisconsin Potato and & Vegetable Growers Association:** To increase awareness and sales of Wisconsin grown potatoes through marketing strategies in grocery stores.
- **Wisconsin Potato Industry Board:** To continue a study to improve processed potato quality by minimizing the negative effects of sugar end defect.
- **Wisconsin Potato Industry Board:** To continue a study to assess soil fumigation and fumigation alternatives in Wisconsin potato production.
- **Wisconsin Potato Industry Board:** To continue to develop potato production systems with drip irrigation and bed configuration to improve efficiency of water and resource use.

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